

Clean Version of Amended Claims

1. A method for automatically managing energy cost using metering data and pricing data, the method comprising the steps of:

receiving metering data from a utility meter, wherein the metering data is electronically transmitted from the utility meter;

receiving pricing data electronically over a network, wherein the pricing data is associated with a plurality of sources of power;

forecasting a forecast load based on the received metering data from the utility meter; and

determining an optimal consumption decision based on the received pricing data and the forecast load, wherein the consumption decision selects one of the plurality of sources of power to thereby reduce utility costs.

21. The method of claim 1, further including automatically implementing the optimal consumption decision, wherein the automatically implementing includes automatically providing power from at least one of the plurality of sources of power to the customer based upon the optimal consumption decision.

22. A system for automatically managing energy cost, the system comprising:
a server communicating with at least one utility meter, wherein said server is
configured to record metering data received from said utility meter via
a network; and
wherein the server is further configured to receive pricing data from each of a
plurality of sources of power from the network, and to determine an
optimal consumption decision wherein the optimal consumption
decision selects one of the plurality of sources of power to thereby
reduce utility costs.

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27. The system of claim 22, wherein the server comprises a central server and a regional
server.

28. The system of claim 27, wherein the central server is configured to receive the pricing
data from the network, to receive the metering data from the regional server, to
determine the optimal consumption decision and to transmit the optimal consumption
decision to the at least one regional server.

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29. The system of claim 27, wherein the regional server is configured to receive the
metering data from the utility meter, to transmit the metering data to the central
server, to receive the optimal consumption decision from the central server and to
transmit the optimal consumption decision to the customer.